



WHOLESOME RESOURCES

Mind-Body Mastery through Yoga, Meditation,
Guided Imagery, Affirmations, Stress Relief and Wellness

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Here is a series of yoga poses that are good for your heart from the innovative work of Dean Ornish, MD. For over 30 years, research has shown how comprehensive lifestyle changes can often halt, and even reverse, heart disease. Program components include a low fat diet, exercise, social support, and stress management (yoga, guided relaxation, breathing, meditation). Reversing Heart Disease, Love and Survival, and other books and articles by Ornish contain the details and data you'll want to have about the lifestyle for a healthy heart. This yoga series was originally published in Yoga Journal (March 06).

HEARTtoHEART

Mindful Movement

poses for
YOUR HEART

Try this gentle practice to
relieve the effects of stress.

*Yoga sequence provided by
Anne Pearce, director of stress
management, the Preventive
Medicine Research Institute*

Scientific research is catching up to what yoga practitioners have felt for thousands of years: People who practice yoga at least three times a week may reduce their blood pressure and, most notably, their risk of heart disease. It also improves the way our arteries contract and expand to aid blood flow, a critical function in preventing plaque buildup.

It doesn't take years of pretzel-like perfection to see results. Even 20 minutes of practice three times a week will soften the edges of life—and your heart. Try this simple sequence for managing stress on the heart. Hold each pose for five breath cycles, except Legs-up-the-Wall, which you can hold for 5 to 15 minutes.

- 1. MOUNTAIN POSE / Tadasana**
Rise up through the crown of the head, while draping the shoulders down the back.
- 2. COBRA POSE / Bhujangasana**
Lift the chest forward and up from the heart center, squeeze the elbows together, and draw the shoulders downward.
- 3. LOCUST POSE / Salabhasana**
Elevate your chest and legs, pressing your hips into the floor and pulling the shoulders down.
- 4. WIND-RELIEVING POSE**
Draw the knee into the chest, and the nose toward the knee. Relax the shoulders downward. Switch sides.
- 5. SEATED FORWARD BEND / Paschimottasana**
Extend the spine and heart forward over the legs, and move the buttocks back.
- 6. LEGS-UP-THE-WALL POSE / Viparita Karani**
With a bolster or blanket beneath your sacrum, firm your legs enough to hold them vertically in place, and release your torso into the floor.
- 7. FISH POSE / Matsyasana**
Press your forearms against the floor to lift your chest and head. Lightly place the crown or back of your head back down, keeping the thighs firm.
- 8. HALF SPINAL TWIST / Ardha Matsyendrasana**
Anchor the left elbow outside the bent right knee. Inhale and lift the sternum upward; exhale and twist to the right. Switch sides.
- 9. EASY POSE / Sukhasana**
In an easy cross-legged position, elongate the heart upward and soften the face in gratitude for your heart-opening practice.

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